

## STORY OF TWO GIRLS SHOWS THE EFFECT OF POLICE BRUTALITY ON THE WORKING CLASS

BY JANE WHITAKER

They are just two out of over 300 who have had similar experiences in the past few days, but their story is a revelation. It shows what this brutality of the police in their battle on the side of the manufacturers is doing. It shows how it weakens in the minds of the best element of the working people their respect for the law when the representatives of it break it by arresting people guilty of no offense, by tearing the clothing of women, by riding at women in an effort to terrorize them, by talking to them in a manner that would cause the arrest of any other man guilty of it.

They are two very young girls. Rebecca is 20 and has been working three years. Eva is 21 and has been working four years. They are both pretty, dainty girls, neither very tall nor very strong. They are both sensitive, the kind of girls who shrink from publicity, who are incapable of violence under any but extraordinary conditions, but the youngest of the two said:

"Was I angry when I was arrested? When he held me so tight that he tore my coat? If I had a hatpin and could have had my hands free I would have stuck it into him. I could have—"

She stopped, then her voice softened. "We weren't doing anything. There were three of us, Esther, Eva and myself, walking on Market and Van Buren sts.

"It is our fight to try to show those who are working that they are taking our bread and butter. But if we had been talking to them it would have been different. We were talking to no one. There wasn't any one but ourselves and the policemen on the street.

"A policeman who had Sergeant F. on his cap said: 'You girls get off the street.' I asked him if we couldn't walk on the street when we were do-

ing nothing, and he grabbed hold of Eva and she cried that he was hurting her hand. It is swollen today because he did hurt it.

"It was so unfair. When she cried out I rushed to him and I said: 'You do not need to hurt her; she has done nothing,' and then Policeman 190 got hold of me and he held me so tightly I couldn't move my arm and I begged him to loosen his hold because he hurt me, and he held tighter so that the sleeve of my coat was pulled so tight around my arm that it tore.

"Then Officer 921 got hold of Eva and they tried to drag us over the sidewalk like beasts, but I kept my feet and the other girls did, too. They took us to the Harrison street police station and locked us in two hours, and I never slept all night, I was so excited. But we will go back there and picket again. This is our fight for a living and the police have no right to arrest us for nothing."

"It would be different if we had been yelling at 'scabs,'" said Eva. "But we don't get any chance. That is the part that makes it seem sad. The scabs who are taking our bread and butter from us are taken along the street by three or four policemen to protect them, while we, who are trying only to get better conditions for ourselves and for all the clothing workers, are arrested for walking on a city street.

"While we were waiting for the patrol Officer 921 said to me, when I told him I did not understand why we couldn't walk on a street: 'Why didn't you stay on the other side of the river where you belong?' I told him this was America, the land of liberty, where people are free and that he talked like a foreigner. He said, pointing with his club to the sidewalk: 'I was born right here.' 'Then you better lay down and die here,' I told him.

"I am not ashamed of being ar-